

For further information, contact the Office of Communications, Office of Personnel Management, 1900 E Street NW., Washington, DC 20415-0001. Phone, 202-606-1800.

## OFFICE OF SPECIAL COUNSEL

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*The Office of Special Counsel investigates allegations of certain activities prohibited by civil service laws, rules, or regulations and litigates before the Merit Systems Protection Board.*

### Activities

The Office of Special Counsel (OSC) was established on January 1, 1979, by Reorganization Plan No. 2 of 1978 (5 U.S.C. app.). The Civil Service Reform Act of 1978 (5 U.S.C. 1101 note), which became effective on January 11, 1979, enlarged its functions and powers. Pursuant to provisions of the Whistleblower Protection Act of 1989 (5 U.S.C. 1211 *et seq.*), OSC functions as an independent investigative and prosecutorial agency within the executive branch which litigates before the Merit Systems Protection Board.

The primary role of OSC is to protect employees, former employees, and applicants for employment from prohibited personnel practices, especially reprisal for whistleblowing. Its basic areas of statutory responsibility are:

- receiving and investigating allegations of prohibited personnel practices and other activities prohibited

by civil service law, rule, or regulation and, if warranted, initiating corrective or disciplinary action;

- providing a secure channel through which information evidencing a violation of any law, rule, or regulation, gross mismanagement, gross waste of funds, abuse of authority, or substantial and specific danger to public health or safety may be disclosed without fear of retaliation and without disclosure of identity, except with the employee's consent; and

- enforcing the provisions of the Hatch Act.

### Sources of Information

Field offices are located in Dallas, TX (Room 7C30, 1100 Commerce Street, 75242; phone, 214-767-8871) and Oakland, CA (Suite 365S, 1301 Clay Street, 94612-5217; phone, 510-637-3460).

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